Troops moved on Chinese border

138. SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SULE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Army has moved more than 6,000 troops to the Chinese border amid reports of Chinese instrusions in Bhutan;

(b) if so, whether the infiltration in Jammu and Kashmir had been on increase and there is a chance of Jihadis and fundamentalists facing a renewed crackdown in Pakistan, sneaking into India;

(c) whether the shifting of Army formations north of Nathu-La comes in the wake of reports of Chinese troops coming close to the Siliguri corridor; and

(d) if so, what are the precautions the Indian Government has taken to check this threat?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) Movement of troops by the Army is carried out as a routine based on operational requirements such as commitments for internal security duties, management of Field/Peace profiles of units and other administrative considerations.

The present politico security situation in Pak does have an impact on the levels of infiltration in J & K. Although no deluge of terrorist from across is expected, some form of uncalibrated and uncontrolled infiltration can be expected to ease out pressure from within Pak.

(d) Indian Army is suitably deployed along the borders and maintains requisite level of operational preparedness to ensure the sanctity and integrity of our borders.

Modernisation of Indian Army

139. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether measures are being taken equip and modernize the Indian Army to enable it to face the emerging challenges;

(b) whether the indigenously developed armoured tank over the period of nearly 40 years have failed to meet the satisfaction level of the Indian Army and is, therefore, constrained to purchase latest tanks from other countries; and

(c) if so, the details thereof with amount spent on the development of the indigenous tank and the Centre's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The indigenous development of Main Battle Tank (MBT) Arjun was sanctioned in 1974. It took quite some time for the development and productionisation of MBT Arjun because of various reasons, and ultimately and indent of 124 tanks was placed on Ordnance Factory Board (OFB)/Heavy Vehicle Factory, Avadi in March 2000. So far 14 numbers of MBT Arjun have been handed over to the Army, out of which 2 are currently undergoing Accelerated Usage Cum Reliability Trials.

The OFB has completed production of 53 tanks so far. Meanwhile, import of tanks, as per the security needs, have been approved by the Government.

An amount of Rs. 305.60 crore has been spent on the development of MBT Arjun.